

November 2, 1970

Dr. William Folk
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Dear Bill:

It was nice to hear from you and to learn that you got settled with a place to live so quickly. Now that Martha and the baby have arrived I am sure it will begin to seem more like home.

It seems to bad that space is at such a premium at the lab and that there will be some delay before you can get started, but I know that once that happens things should move along quite smoothly.

Moshe will, no doubt, write to you about his recent work with the modified C residue. I was away for a week and have not heard the latest as yet, but when he saw your letter he told me he was in the midst of trying to finally identify that residue. I am glad to hear that you are finishing up the sequence paper. I think it would be nice for it to go in as a summarizing note and wait for the more detailed paper later on.

I have only just begun to get into re-writing of the revertant paper and I doubt that I will be ready before I leave on Wednesday for Paris. In any case, it's first priority and I will have it done as soon as possible on my return.

Norm has been making very good progress in identifying the glycyI acceptor as in the membrane as a lipopolysaccharide. In fact, by the use of appropriate mutants blocked in the synthesis of the lipopolysaccharide he may be able to pin it down to a specific sugar residue. The glyX compound is also present in Salmonella membranes and for that system, Norm has many mutants blocked in various stages of the synthesis of the O-antigen, etc. Things look very interesting there and one wonders whether amino acylation of sugar residues in the membrane won't turn out toward biological significances for animal as well as bacterial membranes.

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I wondered the other day whether the failure of Hfr strains to express the gly minus phenotype when carrying glyS mutations might be due to the difference in their cell membrane. For example, if they fail to make the glyX linkage or make it at very much reduced quantities they might not be so dependent on a high rate of glycyl tRNA synthesis. Norm is trying to resurrect the appropriate Hfr strains that you found were so peculiar to see if they ~~have~~ normal levels of glyX.

I will arrive in Paris on Thursday, November 5 for the LePetit conference. I hope that you and George will be there. If not, I hope to see you in London on Monday, November 9. I plan to come to London early in the morning of the 9th and to spend the day at the ICRF. Is there a chance that you and Martha and the Starks and I could have dinner together somewhere in London that night? I am going to be busy all day Tuesday and then on Wednesday I plan to spend the day in Cambridge. I will gly back to California on Thursday; so Monday is about the only time we can get together.

Please pass on my best to George and Mary and to Martha and I will see you next week.

With best regards from all,

Sincerely,

Paul Berg

PB/i